1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

The principle functions of the moiety lie in the regulation of marri- E431
age through the rule of exogamy and the organization of potlatches. The former function 616
constitutes the manifest explanation for adhering to these divisions. Thus River Joe explained that the moieties, going far back in time, serve to prevent anyone from getting "mixed up" and marrying a too closely related person. Any ideas of the superiority of one side over the other could not be adduced.

Certain individuals identified with the Kaska Indians lack affiliation with any side. 616
These are either Slave Indians, who have married into the Kaska nation, or else members of 608
the Nelson tribe. The latter people never followed the moiety pattern of their neighbors. Such individuals generally receive a conventional moiety identification when they marry a member of either exogamous group. No gesture is made toward formalizing such allegiance, the person being verbally identified with the appropriate side or being told to eat with that side at a potlatch. A woman whose moiety membership has been determined by convention transmits this affiliation to her children. There is no question, however, but that such conventional affiliations are less binding than more clearly established moiety membership. Children of a woman whose affiliation was established by convention are often permitted to marry endogamously and even the grandchildren of such a woman are recognized as having extremely weak ties with other members of their side. Sometimes an effort is made to regularize the apparent endogamy of such marriages by having one of the spouses alter her moiety membership. Thus Old Man married the Cree-Kaska daughter of a Cree woman from Fort Nelson. The first Mrs. Man was commonly regarded as a Crow. After she married Old Man, a Crow, however, she was designated as a Wolf. Some people were encountered who had "forgotten" their side and thereafter married girls whom, they later discovered, belonged to their moiety. Louis Maza married a Wolf woman although he himself had been born of a Wolf mother. He later changed his membership to the Crow side. It must not be supposed that such forgetting is common. Louis blamed the priests for having "mixed up" the people regarding their moiety affiliations.

All of the Kaska Indians and Sekani who trade into Lower Post (but excluding the 621 ●
Frances Lake people who generally frequent their own trading post), local white traders, the missionaries, white trappers, and government functionaries may be recognized as members of the community—a "maximal group of persons who normally reside together in face-to-face association."[9] A number of Tahltan Indians from the area southeast and south of Lower Post also frequently visit the settlement and these may be recognized as temporary members of the community. The one or two Tahltan families who maintain permanent residences in Lower Post are, of course, full fledged members. Social interaction between these people is largely restricted to summer and is maintained through visiting; attendance at dances, church, and school; friendship; marriage; gambling and loitering. The total community, as has already been described, gathers in the spring and is dissolved in late summer, when most of its members disperse to their trapping districts and winter settlements. Community interaction during the Christmas and other winter visits to the post is primarily supported through visiting and encounters in the restaurant and bunkhouses.

The Indian section of the community (hereafter referred to as the Indian community) tends to divide itself into three sections, roughly corresponding to the tribal groups trading

[9] Murdock, et al., *Outline of Cultural Materials* (1945), 29.

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

621 in to Lower Post. Each of these groups maintains its residence on one of the three Indian reserves adjoining Lower Post (Fig. 7). On the south bank of the Liard River are the camps of most of the Dease River, Nelson River, and Sekani people; on the north bank, east of the trading stores are other Nelson Indians and two Tahltan families, while west of the trading center and church, the land is reserved for Liard Indians. Such local divisions is traditional but not compulsory. Members of all these tribes occasionally shift their camps to reserves predominantly occupied by tribal neighbors. The growing custom of erecting permanent summer houses, however, will curtail this practice. Although discouraged from doing so by the policeman and Indian Agent, Indians occasionally camp off the reserves in proximity to the camps or houses of white trappers.

621 563 The community as a whole is split into two ethnic divisions, Indian and white. Visiting, intermarriage, and social functions tend to be somewhat restricted between these subdivisions but there are many exceptions to this statement. Dances and gambling games organized by Indians are often participated in by white trappers. Where marriage between an Indian woman and a white man occurs, each normally maintains most intensive social interaction with his own ethnic group. Separate winter accommodations, or bunkhouses, for Indians and whites are maintained by the two largest trading companies; one independent trader, however, does not at all attempt such segregation.

621 499 The Indians do not take an interest in improving conditions in the community or on their reserves. Such improvement was once observed in 1944 when a government bulldozer was employed by some white men to level off their properties in Lower Post. Inspired by this scene, River Joe engaged the operator for the task of constructing an automobile road to the end of the Upper Liard River Indian reserve. He proposed to pay for the work out of contributions secured from other Indians but ended by paying the major share of the costs himself. Since the road now opened the reserve to visits by the policeman's car, he and other Indians soon regretted his enthusiasm.

Social Stratification

564 565 Kaska society is both casteless and classless. While superficial differences of social behavior obtain between families—for example, in the type of houses built, the number of dwellings owned, or the annual income received—any operational significance of such differences is completely absent. If we regard classes as abstractions based on habits of groups in a society,[10] or if we regard class differences as based on associated interest differences,[11] we must conclude that the Kaska cannot be divided along class lines.

621 563 The members of the community emphasize few status differences apart from those associated with age and sex. Political status is ascribed from outside the Indian society and will be discussed below. Ethnic stratification is unemphasized. Younger *métis* are sometimes referred to for a few idiosyncratic traits of behavior, but are not distinguished from the rest of the society in terms of life goals or interests and are not subjected to any differential forms of behavior originating from other members of the society.

[10] Dollard, John, Seminar on Social Structure and Individual Orientation. Yale University, 1943.
[11] Kardiner, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society* (1945), 341–342.

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

641 183 are manifold. Thus, referring to the impending visit of the forestry inspector from Whitehorse, Edward Prince once remarked that everything has a boss: "People have boss, game have boss, even stick [that is, timber] have boss!" To understand the attitudes of the Indian toward governmental authority, the significance of that word, "boss," must be thoroughly understood.

183 621 Within the native community, no man can exercise absolute power over any other adult. Parents are "boss their children," and it is even said that a man is "boss his wife," but the authority of these roles is not arbitrary and rarely abused. Furthermore, between adults authority has no meaning. An individual responds to the originations of another individual only when he stands to gain by such submission or when he cannot tactfully refuse agreement without endangering the harmony of his relationship to the other person. Obedience of an adult to the originations of another member of the Indian community never occurs because the originator possesses a status which of itself requires submission. Between Indians of equal status, that is, of relatively the same degree of maturity and of the same sex, a thorough-going *laissez faire* prevails. Considered by itself, the Indian community is an atomistic society in which every adult claims autonomy and independence. For example, Old Man once sent a message to his neighbor, Louis Maza, asking the latter to join him in a moose hunt. Louis went on the hunt but almost immediately decided to turn back, because he was worried about his infant son's health. When appraised of this decision, Old Man said in effect: "It's up to you. I'm an old man and I can't see to shoot moose. I hoped we would hunt together but you do what's right. It's up to you." Those last words, "Up to you," are frequently heard when adults discuss plans and come to a disagreement. A person with richer experience may state his reasons for disapproving of a projected course of action, but if a younger man does not choose to heed the advice, the matter will usually be dropped. Obviously there are men who try to make their will prevail, who are dominant and assertive. Such men may hold authority within a group of brothers and their wives, but throughout the rest of the community they are generally disliked.

183 [196] 657 The English verb, "to boss," is used by the Kaska with two different connotations. When used in the sense of exerting authority it often connotes criticism or disapproval. In its wider meaning, however, the term denotes the right and ability to order and care for an object, animal, place, or person. Usually, as we have indicated, government is conceived of as a boss in the first sense, as a meddling and bothersome authority whose sovereignty is sometimes even branded as illegitimate. Thus Old Kean complained vigorously that the governments did not help the Indians. He denied governmental sovereignty over the area, and referred to the legitimate authority of a Ground Boss who would someday soon come to regain his dominion. No Indian admits or accepts the authority of a government to censor his drinking. Such authority is perceived as presumptuous and autocratic. In terms of the prevailing atomism of Kaska social life, it is almost inevitable that any activities of the Dominion and local governments in pursuit of their regulative functions should be resented and productive of anxiety. This situation was especially aggravated during the summer of 1945, when reports reached Lower Post that a wire fence had been erected around the Tahltan Indian Reserve at Telegraph Creek, 250 miles south of Lower Post. Although the ostensible reason for the fence was to demarcate Indian lands and protect

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

FAMILY AND KIN

UPPER LIARD KASKA. While the nuclear or conjugal family certainly served important functions in the life of the aboriginal Kaska Indians, this unit was normally incorporated in a larger extended family that linked a woman and her daughters. Typically such an extended family included a man, his wife, perhaps her sisters and their husbands, married daughters and their husbands, unmarried sons, and the unmarried children of the married daughters. An extended family often constituted the microcosmic band, to which additional unrelated individuals of either sex attached themselves. In winter the band or extended family sometimes shared a large conical house, although households containing two sisters and their families of procreation were also common. The distinction between nuclear family, extended family, and household is illustrated in Figure 6. Here the broken lines (enclosing individuals A, B, C, D, G, H, and I) indicate a household in which A, B, and G are members of one nuclear family and C, D, H, and I belong to another. In this diagram E, F, J, and K constitute another and adjacent household. While the children, J and K, would probably spend most of their time in their parent's dwelling they would be equally at home in the household of the maternal grandparents. Daughters tended to establish households quite soon after marriage, perhaps because of the strong avoidance governing the relations of a man and his mother-in-law. Not all microcosmic bands conformed to the matrilocal extended family here outlined. Sometimes a band formed around the nucleus of two brothers and their wives. Daughters on occasion also left their parents' band after marriage to take up residence with their husbands' kin. Bands tended to be fluid among most Arctic-drainage Athapaskan groups and few pressures could be relied upon to maintain any particular type of organization. A man lacking skill in hunting might join with his wife's family, expecting the latter's brother or father to furnish a dependable source of meat. Should his unproductive presence come to be resented, friction might send him to rejoin his own parental group. If his skill or "luck" improved he would be able to fulfill the ideal expectations of a son-in-law or might decide to go off with his wife to shift for himself. Adoption, which was widely practiced, also complicated the composition of Indian groupings. Orphans as well as children whose parents still lived were adopted, the latter being somewhat better treated than parentless children. It is interesting to note that a parent who subsequently wanted an adopted child returned had to offer payment except in cases when the foster parents were guilty of mistreatment.

Following are relationship terms employed by the Upper Liard Indians:

(e)stsil'e: my MoFa, FaFa, FaSiSo (m.s.), WiFa (m.s.), HuFa (w.s.).
(e)stsuu': my MoMo, FaMo, FaSi, FaSiDa (m.s.), WiMo (m.s.), HuMo (w.s.).
eta': my Fa.
ena': my Mo, MoSi.
(e)sta': my FaBr.
sene': my MoBr, SiSo.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard
Dease River

616 589

These laws are followed to the present day amongst all the Indians on the Yukon, Pelly, Teslin Lake, and Upper Liard, but the Mountain Indians do not.

616

Exogamous moieties regulated marriage. Members of one division also prepared the opposite group's dead for burial. The sides tendered potlatches to one another. On such occasions the members of each group adorned their faces with a particular colored paint, blue for the Crows and red for the Wolves. The designs, however, did not differ. When a large number of people camped together each moiety "rustled" wood for the fire, stacking poles in a single heap. Then they would slide the fuel into the fire, each side in succession adding one piece after the other. Afterwards the brothers-in-law (i.e., the men belonging to opposite moieties) sat around and talked. The practice of fire tending may be regarded as a simple rite of intensification,[15] serving to promote interaction between the segments and thus to contribute to the solidarity of the larger aggregate.

565 567 [177]

Three social levels were distinguished in the pre-contact Kaska community, the rich, poor, and slaves. Social stratification on the basis of wealth is a prominent feature in the culture of the Pacific Drainage Athapaskans and is even more extensively developed among the Indians of the Northwest Coast. One informant (O) knew about an hereditary nobility among the Tlingit but stated flatly that the system of social stratification found there had no counterpart in the Cassiar. Such a statement is not unexpected in terms of the association to be anticipated between class structure and surplus-wealth production.

557 565

A rich man, tenatiia (the same word today is used to designate the Supreme Being), stood out among his fellows because he could support four or five wives, wore finer clothes, enjoyed more possessions, and employed occasional servants. His word received ready attention. "People always listened to a rich man." Wealth derived from skillful hunting and trapping. The poor man, tenaɣteɣxe?it?a, lived with a single wife and often found it difficult to provide even for her and their children. Poorer clothes distinguished the poor man and in group affairs his word carried little weight. Ideally, cordial relations existed between the rich and poor. If a rich man spoke harshly to his less fortunate peer the former's supernatural power might desert him and all his ability to kill game would be reduced. Under such circumstances helping a poor man would assist him to recoup his luck. Poor men who received assistance from wealthier people repaid such help by working for their patrons, for example, visiting the latters' deadfalls. In this way the rich came to enjoy the labor of servants. A slave, xiina (this is said to be a Tlingit word adopted into the Liard River vocabulary), represented a war captive. Inasmuch as the Kaska generally killed enemy male captives, slaves were usually women. A man sometimes referred in fun to his sister's children as slaves.[16]

[735]

567

621 622

Dease River Kaska. As late as 1928 Father Allard, an Oblate missionary stationed at McDame Creek, wrote, "All members of the tribe are free to hunt and fish over all the tribal territory. They hunt and fish in little bands of one, two or three families,—each family consisting of father, mother and children, with sometimes other members,

[15] Chapple and Coon, *Principles of Anthropology* (1942), 485–486.
[16] See above, p. 77.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard

601 171 Two grandparent and four sibling terms (generally extended to parallel cousins) are found throughout the area. In general the kin terms are consistent with a system that includes matrilocal residence, matrilineal moieties, sororal polygyny, sororate, and asymmetrical cross-cousin marriage with the MoBrDa or FaSiSo.[9]

SOCIAL UNITS LARGER THAN THE FAMILY

616 619 621 Two permanent social groupings larger than the family or kin group may be distinguished in the Cassiar, the band and the moiety. It is scarcely possible to discern fixed economic or social classes, the latter term referring here simply to a distinction between rich and poor families. The term "band" designates the microcosmic extended family group with its unrelated hangers-on or adopted children. Several such units occupying contiguous districts constituted the unorganized and highly amorphous macrocosmic band for which we have used the word "tribe."[10] Beyond speaking a similar dialect and intermarrying, the component units of a macrocosmic band experienced little feeling of solidarity. Vague shifting boundaries further reduced the integration of these groups. As already pointed out, relatively large aggregates of people remained in temporary association around a fish lake in summer and winter. Such transitory villages, however, probably did not usually include an entire macrocosmic band, although the pattern of living and playing together, like marriage, must have counteracted feuding and thus strengthened the integration of the people in a territory.

596 622 *Upper Liard Kaska.* Bordering the twisting valley of the upper Liard River lay the territory exploited by the extended-family bands of the Natitu?agotena. Little could be recalled about these units except that on occasion, in winter and summer, many of them camped in one place (tenanat?klone, "lots of people stay together"). Each of the migratory bands recognized a headman. As one informant said, "Before the arrival of the white men there were many bosses" (X). These leaders were primarily family heads so that, according to Chapple and Coon's system of analysis, true (i.e., interfamily) political organization remained only incipiently realized in aboriginal Kaska society.[11] The headman's ability as a hunter, a quality that attracted people to join his band, also helped him to accumulate wealth. When need required, his food resources were freely distributed among the band members. A leader held authority as long as he lived. Upon death a son succeeded to the position of family chief. Should the youth be a poor or indifferent hunter, any other man in the band might be called upon to assume leadership. The death of a headman probably caused a redistribution of the band's personnel around one or more new leaders. Leaders who lost competence found themselves ignored, the people adhering to a more intelligent man. The headman's functions transcended mere food getting. His wisdom derived from experience, and the ability to speak convincingly reinforced his authority in moral matters. When food resources ran low the

[9] See below, pp. 131, 135.

[10] This terminology was first employed to describe the social organization of the Fort Nelson Slave. Honigmann, *Ethnography and Acculturation of the Fort Nelson Slave* (1946), 64–65.

[11] These writers have defined true political authority as arising when one individual or group originates action to persons other than his kin. Chapple and Coon, *Principles of Anthropology* (1942), 330.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Dease River

married or single.[17] Such a description represents the aboriginal pattern of Dease River social organization. Each band recognized a "chief,"[18] or leader, who guided the people in hunting. Outstanding in his ability to secure game, a headman was also always a rich man. Sometimes as many as seven families comprised his following. As a headman aged and became incapacitated, he relinquished his role in favor of a son or brother whose duties included caring for the retired leader.

All the Dease River Indians were divided into two moieties, tsimii ("sides"), the Wolf and Crow. The two sections represented exogamous units in which membership followed the matrilineal line. Potlaches promoted interaction between the divisions, the members of which also prepared each other's dead for burial and competed in sports.[19]

Rich and poor men tended to stand out in the pre-contact community. The former represented able hunters who managed to secure large quantities of meat and skins. Such abundance attracted followers and dependents who accepted their patron's authority. Thus rich men also held positions of band leadership. The poor depended on the wealthy for food and skins. They made no return for such assistance. Sometimes a man became temporarily impoverished as a result of losing his hunting "luck." Help to such a man was advantageous because he would certainly remember the generosity when his fortunes turned. Poverty, as long as it did not stem from laziness, provided no bar to marriage, but a lazy man merited only laughter and jeers.[20]

[17] Allard, *Notes on the Kaska and Upper Liard Indians* (1928), 24–25.

[18] When the Hudson's Bay Company entered the Cassiar, they appointed local chiefs to develop trapping. The word is derived from this period. The "company chief" was provided with a certain amount of regalia and received flour and tobacco to distribute to his "boys." Upon the Indians' arrival at the post the manager fired a gun to salute the executive. Prior to this period, informants agreed, no comparable leader existed among the Dease River people.

[19] Teit reports a more complex social system for the adjoining Tahltan. "Their social organization appears to be based largely on that obtaining among the Tlingit. Like the latter, they are divided into two exogamous phratries called Wolf and Raven (as in the case of the Kaska, the former is more important and is said to represent the original Tahltan people). Children belong to the phratry and clan of their mother. Each phratry consists of three clans or gentes, each of which has a hereditary chief and a territory of its own. These six chiefs form the governing body of the tribe. The clans do not have special totems, nor traditions deriving their origin from mythological ancestors. Crests and totems usually belong to the phratry. A seventh clan exists at the present day, having originated about 150 years ago through immigration of and intermarriage with the Tlingit. It belongs to the Wolf phratry, but has no recognized territory nor chief within the country of the Tahltans; it is called by its Tlingit name. There is an aristocracy of rank and wealth, but these nobles have no special rights in hunting grounds, fisheries, etc. Methods of obtaining rank, the potlatch, and many of the social and ceremonial customs of the tribe are closely adopted from the Tlingit." (Teit, *On Tahltan (Athabaskan) Work* [1912], 484–485. See also Jenness, *Indians of Canada* [1932], 373.) Mrs. William Strong, of Vancouver and Telegraph Creek, B. C., loaned the present writer several photographs of a Tahltan potlatch held in relatively recent times. These showed men wearing dark cloth robes embroidered with what appeared to be crest figures and very similar to the robes often illustrated for the Northwest Coast.

In Lower Post we learned of only two exogamous moieties among the Tahltan, the Wolf and Crow. Teit's description of clans with territorial rights does not sound convincing and may refer to local divisions in the Tahltan nation.

[20] Slaves were reported for the Tahltan where one "chief," Makuske, is said to have held 22 captive workers. These hunted and fished for their master and were well treated. (Personal communication from